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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 9 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a statement by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia (see annex) on the violation of the airspace of Georgia by Russian military helicopters.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 9 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the violation of the airspace of Georgia by Russian military helicopters

On 7 September 2011, at 1.05 p.m., three Russian MI-8 military helicopters breached Georgian airspace over the Tanie gorge near Shatili village in severe violation of the fundamental principles of international law, as well as of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia. The helicopters intruded 3 km deep into Georgian airspace and circled around the Georgian border police checkpoint for approximately 15 minutes. Afterwards the helicopters left the Georgian airspace.

This violation of Georgia's airspace represents a continuation of Russia's policy aimed at infringing on Georgia's statehood and independence. Such a blatant contravention of international law is clearly aimed at provoking an adequate response from the Georgian side and is intended to further escalate the security situation on the ground. Under the aforesaid circumstances, the Georgian side has acted responsibly and with restraint, as further deterioration of the security situation is not in the interests of Georgia nor the wider region.

The continuous breach by Russia of its obligations undertaken under the Six-Point Ceasefire Agreement, its utter disrespect of international law, its reluctance to sign the non-use of force agreement with Georgia, the masterminding of terrorist attacks from the occupied territories, as well as the repeated intrusions into Georgian airspace serve as clear evidence of the aggressive intentions of Russia towards Georgia. Under these circumstances, it becomes obvious that new provocations should be expected from the Russian side.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia will duly inform the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union and other relevant international organizations on the aforementioned incident. Furthermore, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia expects the international community to both provide a proper assessment of the recent violation of Georgian airspace by the Russian armed forces and continue to insist on the full implementation by Russia of the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement, along with pressuring it to respect fundamental norms and principles of international law.

Tbilisi, 7 September 2011